

Guide To Animal Tracks

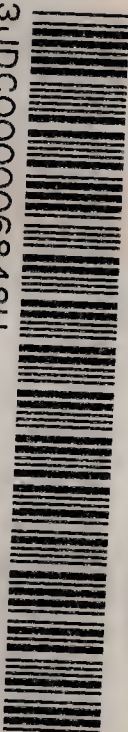
rd by R. Marlin Perkins

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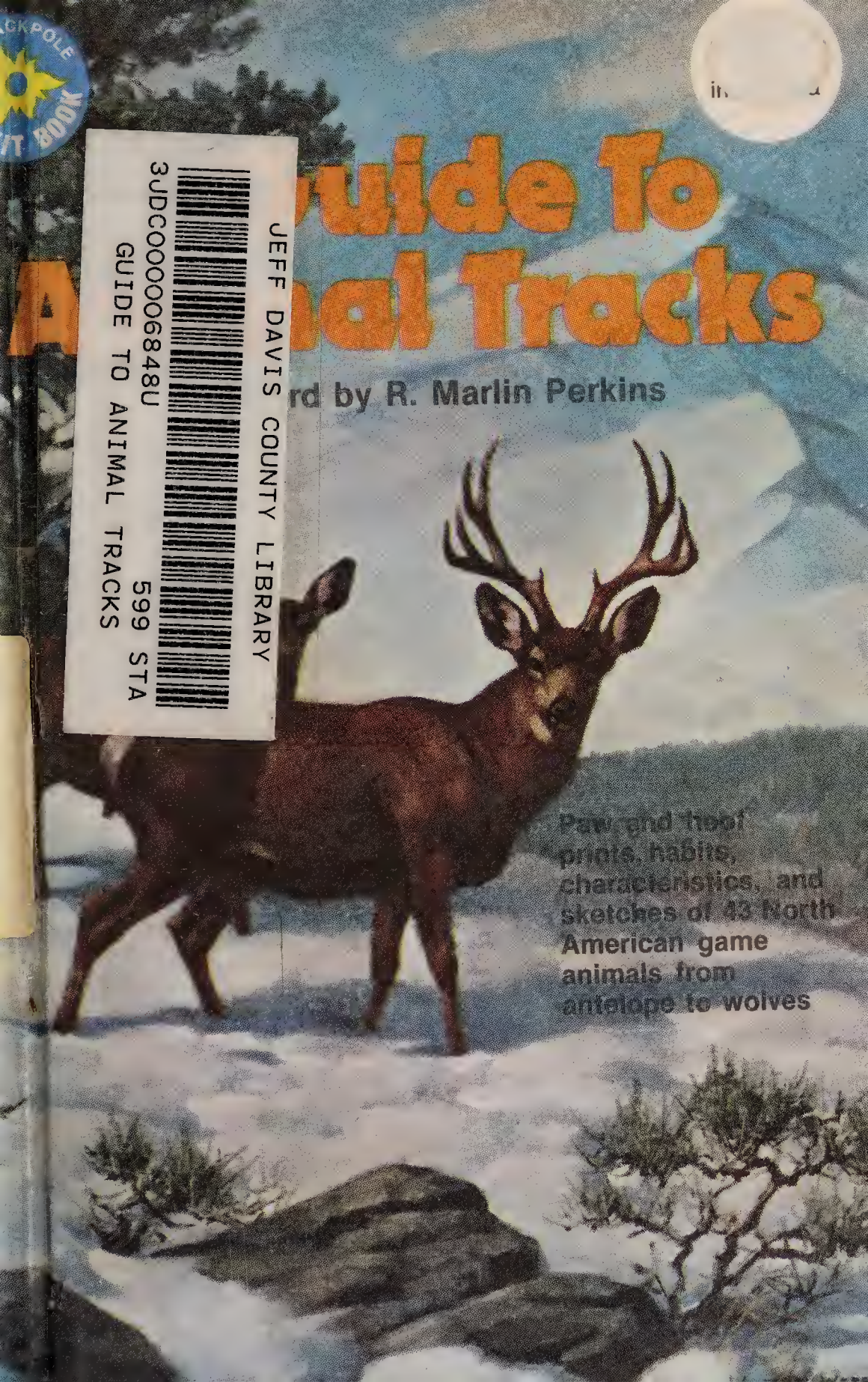
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GUIDE TO ANIMAL TRACKS

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Paw and hoof
prints, habits,
characteristics, and
sketches of 43 North
American game
animals from
antelope to wolves



GUIDE TO ANIMAL TRACKS





**guide
to
ANIMAL
TRACKS**

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STACKPOLE BOOKS

GUIDE TO ANIMAL TRACKS

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Introduction

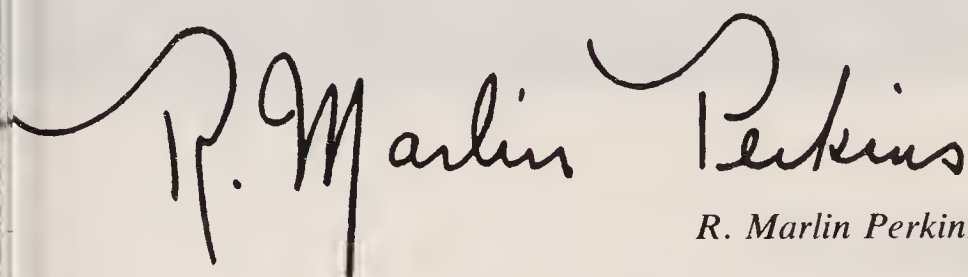
As a small boy I had a very high regard for the individual who could observe the track of an animal in the snow or soft earth, then proclaim with complete positiveness that a certain wild creature passed here. After a few such experiences I was able to take a great pride in divulging my own knowledge of spoor to others.

Sometimes we are to associate the track with its maker, because in the past we had actually seen the track being made, but more often this is not the case because so many creatures, particularly fur bearers, are nocturnal in habit or extremely wily.

As we spend more time at it, tracks and trails divulged more information than just species identification. We see the sign of the hunter and the hunted. We observe if it was a cautious stalk on an unsuspecting victim or whether it is a picture of the chase. Then we learn of feeding habits and hiding places from the course of the trails. The nature of habits and habitat begin to clarify. Our knowledge of wildlife grows and interest increases. Great personal satisfaction stems from sign reading, and we find that such knowledge is held in high esteem by others who can but wonder or guess, just as we respected others as our own interest began to develop.

The reproductions of the beautiful and accurate sketches of the various animals of the North American continent by the renowned Canadian artist Luis M. Henderson offer accurate visual identification. The sketches of tracks identify the signatures with the animals which made them. Pictures of comparative tracks are of particular value. The text gives facts, some of which are not widely known, about the creatures of Mother Nature.

I consider this volume of interest and value to all youths and to all outdoor-loving people who enjoy hiking in the country. This is definitely a royal road to such knowledge.

A large, elegant handwritten signature in black ink. The signature reads "R. Marlin Perkins". The "R" is large and stylized, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left. The "Marlin" is written in a cursive script, and "Perkins" is also in cursive, with a large, looping "P".

R. Marlin Perkins



Rabbit

HISTORY: The ubiquitous cottontail ranges throughout this continent and is more hunted, by boy and skilled sportsman alike, than any other North American animal or bird. In spite of the hunter's yearly toll, as well as the high death rate due to numerous natural enemies, and sweeping scourges of disease, the rabbit continues to survive in quantity. Several litters are born each year with about four young to each litter. The average weight of adults is two to three pounds.

CHARACTERISTICS: The cottontail is very timid and is easily frightened into flight. His first swift spurt is not sustained, however, for he relies on hiding rather than running. When closely pursued he will often run into a hole dug by some other animal. When he



picks a hiding place for rest it usually has two exits, to observe the approach of an enemy and to make sure of a getaway.

Food: In summer he feeds primarily on herbs, short shrubs and his favorite clover. Since he does not hibernate like the woodchuck, he must seek winter food, which is usually bark and twigs of low trees and shrubs.



Prairie Dog

The prairie dog is an animal of the prairies, but he is not even remotely connected with the dog, but is a member of the squirrel family and is found only in the New World.

IDENTIFICATION: The prairie dog is short-legged, heavy-bodied, and sturdy, usually appearing rather fat. The length ranges from 14 to 16 inches, the male of the species being heavier. The coarse-haired coat ranges in color from dark pinkish hazel to black and buff.

CHARACTERISTICS: The prairie dog is a sociable animal, and makes large burrows near one another, forming one colony in a locality. The prairie dog is usually ridden with vermin and the tick-borne tularemia is

often fatal. Like the woodchuck, they communicate by whistling.

FOOD: The chief source of food is the bunch grass of the plains, but the prairie dog prefers a more succulent diet of vegetation and cultivated crops. Little water is required in his existence.

BREEDING: The prairie dog has a high reproductive rate, with an average of four, and sometimes six or eight, to a litter. The number of young is variable with the range, as influenced by weather and food. They are born in early May or June and mature quickly.





Grey Squirrel

IDENTIFICATION: The average grey squirrel weighs about one pound and measures 19 inches in length, 9 inches of which is tail.

CHARACTERISTICS: Unlike his arch enemy, the pugnacious red squirrel, the grey usually is content to live at peace with his neighbors and only occasionally will he fight to preserve some section which he deems his private domain. His enemies are numerous and when frightened he takes to the nearest tree.

BREEDING: The mating season is in the late winter and the gestation period is 44 days. Generally from two to four are born. The second litter arrives about mid-July. The first litter is born in a convenient hollow tree but the second is born in a leaf nest. Babys



squirrels are blind at birth and remain so for about five weeks. The tiny bodies are hairless, without ears, and have only rudimentary tags for limbs. Once full grown they are highly migratory.

FOODS: Favorite diet is nuts, buds, corn and apples.

RANGE: They are found over much of the United States and Canada in wooded areas.



Woodchuck

NAME: Early Devonshire settlers gave this animal the name woodchuck after the word "chuck" meaning little pig. In the South it is commonly called groundhog.

RANGE: This animal is present in most of North America, ranging from the Atlantic coast west to Oklahoma and north from British Columbia to Alaska.

CHARACTERISTICS: The home is in burrows which they dig or a den among the rocks. There is usually more than one entrance. This animal is diurnal in habit. A whistle-like alarm call is used. The diet is limited to vegetation. The woodchuck is a true hibernator, body temperature drops to 40° F., the heartbeat slumps to seven per

minute and respiration one per minute. The pelt is coarse and brown. Adults range in weight from 12 to 20 pounds. The average size is two feet; the legs are short and the body is solidly built.

BREEDING: Four to six young are born in the spring. At an early age the young are forced to leave the burrow and fend for themselves.

FOOD VALUE: The flesh is fit for human consumption. The chuck is classified as game with regular hunting seasons in some states.





Skunk

This is a large family having several species and subspecies.

IDENTIFICATION: There is little likelihood of confusing a skunk with other mammals, for he is endowed with a special protection which makes him virtually immune to attack from other animals—the discharging of a vapor of terrible and potent aroma. The danger signal is when the head goes down and the tail comes up. Of all North American animals they alone possess a pelt which is predominantly black with white stripes. The long-haired tail of an adult is about 15 inches in length, which is more than half the body length. The weight is approximately 9 pounds.

CHARACTERISTICS: Most of their hunting is done after dark, but they are sometimes seen in daytime. Their homes are dens in the ground, under buildings and among the

rocks with a bed composed of grass. Their most dangerous enemy is the great horned owl.

BREEDING: Four to ten, often six, young are born in April or early May. When about one-fourth grown they accompany the mother on nocturnal forays for food, following her single file from place to place.

FOOD: His appetite is cosmopolitan and he eats about anything that is available. Eggs, snakes, large insects and sweet corn are favorable foods.





Opossum

NAME: Opossum is an Algonquin name having to do with pouch in which mother carries young.

RANGE: This animal is found in the wastelands of every state in the union and as far north as Southern Ontario.

CHARACTERISTICS: The home is made in a hollow tree or log or a woodchuck burrow. The opossum is not a true hibernator, but it does sleep much during the winter. A peculiar trait is to feign death when cornered.

BREEDING: The gestation period is only 12½ days. The newborn are extremely small, being less than the size of a honey bee, and they have the appearance of a pink worm. Frequently the litter consists of one and one-

half dozen, but the mother can feed but 13. They remain in the pouch for about two months until the size of mice. At first, when traveling, they cling to the fur of the mother's back.

IDENTIFICATION: The body length of the adult is two and one-half feet including a foot long tail. Coarse long white guard hairs overlie a softer under fur of dark-tipped hairs. The face and mouth are long and the teeth are sharp.

FOOD: The diet consists of almost anything including greens, fowl, eggs and carrion.





Raccoon

NAME: This is white man's attempted spelling of the Algonquin Indian name *arakun*, meaning literally "he scratches with his hands."

RANGE: They are found in the eastern United States west to Wisconsin and south into the bayou country of Louisiana.

CHARACTERISTICS: An expert climber, the raccoon usually makes his home in the den of trees but at times he uses fissures in cliffs. Nocturnal in habits, the chief enemy is man and his dog. Does not lie dormant in the winter, but he does sleep for extended periods of time.

BREEDING: After a gestation period of 63 days, three to six young are born in early April.

SIZE: 24 pounds is a large 'coon.

FOOD: He consumes a wide variety of plant and animal food with equal relish. Fruits, grains, nuts, berries, crayfish, frogs, eggs, fish, grasshoppers, fowl are all on his bill-of-fare.

FUR: While never of great value as compared to many other skins, the pelt is used in a variety of ways, often being dyed or clipped.

The flesh of this game animal is sometimes consumed by humans.





Muskrat

NAME: The name originated because of a pair of perineal glands which secrete an odor of musk.

FURBEARER: The muskrat has replaced the beaver in importance to the fur trade. The long guard hairs are dark brown, the undercoat is a dense soft grey.

RANGE: This animal is found in 47 states, Canada and Alaska.

CHARACTERISTICS: The body is squat and thick, the legs are short, hind feet are broad and partially webbed, the long scaly tail is narrow and sparsely covered with hair. The length of the animal is 23 inches including a 10 inch tail and the weight is between two and two and one-half pounds.

HABITAT: Essentially a water animal, the muskrat stays where both food and cover are found. It lives in salt or freshwater marshes. The home is either a domelike structure of water plants or a den in the bank. It is found in every state but Florida.

FOOD: Aquatic plants furnish the bulk of the diet, however, a small portion of animal food such as mussels, salamanders, and fish is consumed.





Mink

IDENTIFICATIONS: The wild mink is about 24 inches long, including a fairly bushy tail, which accounts for about one-third of his length. The body is trim and movements are snakelike. The feet are partially webbed and there are five toes on each foot. The valuable, dark pelt is highly prized.

CHARACTERISTICS: The mink is an excellent swimmer and spends most of his time either in the water or along the banks where he finds his food. On land he either travels with short, quick, nervous steps, or lopes along with his back arched like an angry cat.

FOOD: He is carnivorous and his menu consists of frogs, fish, ducks (especially little ones), and occasionally a muskrat. He also

eats mice and other small rodents, birds and their eggs and rabbits.

BREEDING: The home is usually located in the hole of a bank along water. The usual litter is five or six and the mother takes care of them during the summer.

RANGE: Mink are found all over the North American continent except in arid regions. Although prolific, they are seldom plentiful in any area.





Beaver

Fortunes were made by trafficking in beaver pelts and large companies were formed to organize his capture. This animal had much to do with the exploration and settlement of North America. Trappers pushed further and further into the wilderness to be followed shortly by settlers. Explorers made journeys in search of new beaver country and settlements sprang up in their wake. At one time the men's hat industry would use nothing but this fur to make fine felt. The demand was so great that the animal was trapped to extinction in many places. The average weight is 40 pounds and the average total length is 45 inches including a 12 inch tail.

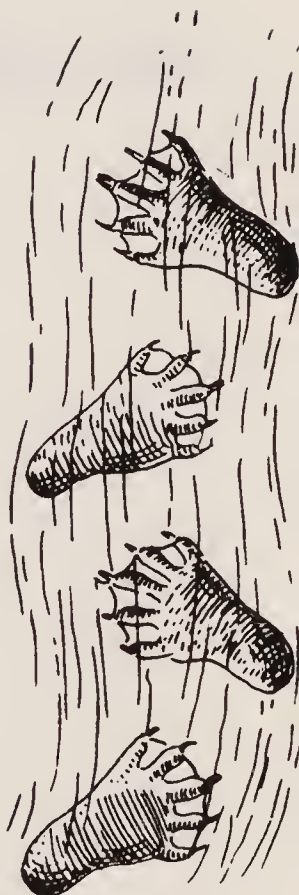
CHARACTERISTICS: This, the largest North American rodent, is an aquatic engineer. It

rarely ventures far from water, where it spends most of its time, however, a large portion of the food is obtained on land. It insists upon having a home where the water line remains level, therefore it builds a dam of sticks, logs and mud, then constructs a living quarter of the same material, which protrudes above water level in the dam so that it appears as a small island.

RANGE: The range extends over most of North America from Labrador and Alaska to southern Texas, however, the distribution is spotty over much of this area.

BREEDING: Mating usually takes place in late January or February and the kits are born in April or May. While the mother is busy with her brood the male leaves the lodge, but he returns in the autumn and remains until the next group of kits are born the following year.

FOOD: This nocturnal animal feeds mainly on the bark of alder and poplar but other bark is sometimes consumed, as well as tuberous roots of aquatic plants and other vegetable matter.





Porcupine

IDENTIFICATION: The name comes from the two Latin words, *porcus* meaning pig and *spina* meaning thorn or spine. Second largest rodent in North America, the adult is 30 to 36 inches in length and weighs from 15 to 40 pounds, the latter weight being when they are very fat. The pelage is composed of long, soft underfur of black or brownish tone and stiff spines of quills of varying lengths which form a protective outer covering. The spines are creamish white with black tips. The shorter quills on the stubby six inch tail are most deadly. The legs are short and stout; the front feet have but four toes, the back feet five, and each toe is equipped with long sharp claws for easy climbing. The head is short and rounded.



CHARACTERISTICS: The only means of defense for this slow moving animal is its bristling array of barbed spines, but this is usually ample against all enemies except the fisher. He is by nature a solitary creature. A common belief that the porcupine can throw his quills is untrue. The animal is strictly a vegetarian with a fondness for salt.

RANGE: The species is found in the forested areas over the greater part of Canada and in the eastern part of the United States north of 40 degrees latitude.



Fox

The red fox and the grey fox differ in appearance and habits to a small extent and there seems to be conflict between the two, for they do not cross or care to live near each other. Of the two, the red fox runs harder and longer when pursued by hounds, hence it is more highly regarded by those interested in the chase. The average red fox weighs about 9 pounds and the grey about two pounds less. Both belong to the dog group, all having the same number of teeth.

Through the centuries, both have left a record symbolizing cunningness, sagacity and courage. Much has been written and spoken pro and con regarding their role as a predator.

CHARACTERISTICS: For a few weeks the young hunt with the vixen, then at the age of eight or ten weeks the family breaks up. They are basically carnivorous and nocturnal, but not 100 per cent so.

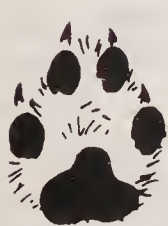
BREEDING: The gestation period varies from 49 to 52 days. The one litter which is produced annually, usually consists of five or six. The den is in the ground or in rock ledges, and dead leaves are employed to make a comfortable nest.

FOOD: Among the chief items are field mice, rabbits, birds, poultry, insects, fruit, berries, snakes and crayfish.

FUR: The value of pelts has fluctuated with the whims of style, the red fox being in greater demand than the grey.



Red Fox



Grey Fox



Coyote

IDENTIFICATION: An adult will weigh about 21 pounds and the length is four feet, including the tail. In appearance this animal is similar to a small German shepherd dog, however, the dog is its mortal enemy. The winter coloration is somewhat lighter than the summer pelt.

CHARACTERISTICS: In a den, similar to that of the wolf, it produces a litter of young averaging seven in number, nevertheless, there are on record individual litters of 15 to 19.



Food: They are predaceous by nature and transient to the extent of following their food supply. Food consists of birds, insects, carrion, rabbits, poultry and sheep. Operating in packs they can kill animals of the deer class.

RANGE: The coyote is found from Point Barrow in the frozen north to tropical Costa Rica in Central America, a remarkable north and south range of 7200 miles. There is grave danger of it spreading into the east where its predaceous character would cause much damage. For this reason the possession of captured live ones is illegal in some states.



Wolves

Two species of wolves occur in North America, the red and the gray, the latter tends to be heavier in the northern most range. The largest of the gray wolves weigh 175 pounds, nearly 100 pounds heavier than the largest of the red wolves.

CHARACTERISTICS: Wolves generally mate for life. The gestation period is similar to the dog's 60 to 63 days and they give birth to an average litter of seven whelps. They are generally born in a den among the rocks or in the ground. In spite of an acute sense of smell, alert hearing and extremely keen eyesight, regularity of habits over runways has

been the weak point in his defense. A pack generally consists of the intermingling of several wolf families and is of short duration.

FOOD: The diet of this carnivorous animal ranges from musk ox to mouse, however, being equipped with great power to kill, the preference is for large prey. The predaceous nature of the wolf has made man his persistent enemy. The passing of time has caused vast modification in habitat.





Canadian Lynx

IDENTIFICATION: This awkward appearing cat has very long legs, a very short tail, large paws, long tufts on the ears and a pronounced ruff on the cheeks. In color it is a soft, warm gray, occasionally mottled with indistinct brownish patches. The tail is tipped with black and there are black markings on the head and throat. Males may attain a weight of 40 pounds; the females are smaller.

CHARACTERISTICS: This shy, stealthy creature, which is scarce, is rarely seen by man, for it is nocturnal and makes its lair in heavy thickets, rock ledges and caves. Two kittens are usually born in a litter. The pelt is beautiful. The lynx and the bobcat are two of the cat family which are palatable, tasting much like veal.

RANGE: The distribution of the lynx extends from Newfoundland to Alaska, but it is rarely found very far south of the Canadian border. Unlike the bobcat, it does not like civilization, preferring the wilderness forests.



Cougar

IDENTIFICATION: Some common names for the Cougar are Mountain Lion, Panther and Puma. It is characterized by its very long tail, heavy legs, and proportionately small, round head.

CHARACTERISTICS: A big male cougar attains a maximum weight of slightly over 200 pounds and an overall length of 8 to 9 feet. In color the cougar grades from light tawny gray to almost "red," and some species, found in Florida, are occasionally almost chocolate brown. Regardless of where he is found the characteristics and habits of this big cat remain the same.

FOOD: His favorite natural food is venison and it has been estimated that a grown cougar will kill, on an average, one deer per week the year around. In ranching areas he prefers a colt to any other food, even venison, and will sometimes kill grown horses or calves, sheep, and on occasion, boars.



Bobcat (WILDCAT)

IDENTIFICATION: The bobcat differs from the Canadian lynx in that it is somewhat smaller; its tail is slightly longer, and the tufts on its ears are not so pronounced. There are several related species and considerable variation in color and size. In general, the animal is tawny-brown and spotted with dark brown spots on the back and sides, underparts are yellowish-white spotted with black. The average weight of the full grown male is 20 to 25 pounds.

BREEDING: As with some other members of the cat family there seems to be no set mating season for this animal and the young



may be born at any time of the year. There are usually two to four kittens in each litter.

FOOD: Bobcats are very fond of small game such as rabbits, small rodents of all kinds, fawns, and whatever birds they can catch. They are especially fond of young wild turkeys. In sheep country bobcats kill many lambs; they are also very fond of small pigs and poultry.



Marten

IDENTIFICATION: The marten is one of the weasel clan, with a body slightly smaller than the common house cat and a medium-short bushy tail. Its body is long and lithe; the limbs are short. The head is small, and the ears are broad, rounded, and prominent. Its pelt is very valuable.

CHARACTERISTICS: The marten is largely arboreal in habits although he does take some of his prey on the ground. His long slender claws and agile body permit him to climb and travel through the treetops as well as the squirrel on which he feeds.

FOOD: Besides the squirrels that furnish much of his food, he also feeds on other small rodents such as mice, chipmunks, and rabbits.

Grouse and other birds form part of his diet, as do few reptiles, frogs, and insects. He also feeds on nuts, fruits and berries to some extent.

BREEDING: Martens mate in the late winter or early spring and the young are generally born toward the end of April. The litters vary from one to five, with three or four being about average.



RIGHT
HIND
FOOT



LEFT
FRONT
FOOT



RIGHT
FRONT
FOOT



LEFT
HIND
FOOT



Fisher

IDENTIFICATION: The fisher is similar in structure to the martin but is larger, more powerful, and a darker color. The fur is long and durable. The average adult is about three feet in length and weighs from 8 to 12 pounds. Their little cousin is the martin and their big cousin the wolverine.

CHARACTERISTICS: The fisher prefers to be near a stream, lake or swamp although he is by no means so aquatic as the mink. He can leap from limb to limb like a squirrel and spends as much time aloft as he does on the ground. Except for man he has few enemies because he is too quick and agile for the larger predators and he is so powerful that none of the smaller animals dare to attack him.

FOOD: The bulk of his diet consists of small mammals and birds with the possibility of a few nuts and berries when other food is scarce. He is adept at killing the porcupine without getting full of quills, by ripping the underside with sharp claws.

RANGE: These animals range from Maine to the Yellowstone National Park and north to the sixtieth parallel. They are becoming rare throughout their entire range.





Weasel

HISTORY: The weasel clan numbers 36 species and sub-species throughout North America. As a group they represent a high degree of development in predatory and carnivorous tendencies and are notorious for wanton killing. The winter coat is pure white with a black-tipped tail in the north, but in the southern parts of their range they remain brown and yellow throughout the year.

IDENTIFICATION: This is a small, slender animal with a long neck, long body and short legs, weighing less than one-half pound. The head is small; the ears are rounded and set close to the skull. The soles of the feet are furred. Both sexes are alike in appearance but the males are invariably larger than the

females. An adult male is about 11 inches long, the female about 9 inches. The fur consists of a short, dense undercoat covered by long shining guard hairs. In summer the pelage is a warm brown on the upper body and yellowish-white below.

CHARACTERISTICS: It seems incredible that such a small body could house such a vicious nature. The weasel goes beyond the law of survival and often kills for the mere pleasure of killing. Many are so bold in nature that if they do hide from man a squeaking sound will cause them to show immediately. Their main food is the blood of rodents, birds and poultry.





Badger

IDENTIFICATION: The badger is built along somewhat the same lines as the wolverine with short, stout legs and a thick, heavy body. The average adult is about 28 inches long and weighs around 15 to 20 pounds. The feet are equipped with strong sharp claws which aid the animal in frequent digging activity. The long sharp pelage is grizzled-gray above and black below. The head is black with a white stripe on the back.

RANGE: The distribution is wide but sparse over most of the plains and prairie country west of the Mississippi River from the Prairie Provinces of Canada into Mexico. Badger occur in Wisconsin—as far east as Michigan.

BREEDING: The young are born late in the spring and cared for by the mother. When



nearly full grown, the family breaks up and each goes his separate way.

FOOD: A night feeder, the carnivorous badger captures his prey by digging them out of their dens. He prefers gophers, prairie dogs and ground squirrels, however, he will also devour mice, insects, roots and occasionally young birds.

Wolverine

IDENTIFICATION: The wolverine is the largest and fiercest of the weasel tribe. The adult male wolverine is about 36 inches long and weighs between 25 and 30 pounds. Some species are longer by a few inches and weigh a few pounds more.

CHARACTERISTICS: The wolverine is one of the most dreaded animals in all North America. He not only strikes terror into the hearts of all the smaller creatures but even the moose is afraid of him. He is a very strong and powerful animal. A very keen sense of smell offsets his disadvantage of a weakness in his vision. His teeth are long; sharp claws are his fighting instruments, but it is the viciousness of his attack and the indomitable spirit with which he goes into battle that usually prove the difference.



FOOD: The wolverine usually relies on the kills of other animals for his food. He also is the hunter's and trapper's nemesis because he steals bait or feeds on trapped game, ruining what he can't eat with an evil-smelling fluid similar to that of the skunk.

BREEDING: For most of the year the wolverine leads a solitary existence. He mates toward the end of March, and usually from three to five young are born in June.



Otter

IDENTIFICATION: The otter is a large member of the weasel family. All four feet end in five toes, which are webbed. This creature with the long lithe body, short legs and heavy tail is a superb swimmer. Never so abundant and easy to trap as the beaver, yet the otter has always ranked as one of the most valuable fur-bearers. Large specimens weigh 25 pounds with a body length of 45 inches, 14 inches of which is the stubby tail.

FOOD: Strictly carnivorous, the otter feeds mainly on crayfish, however, he will eat fish, muskrats, young beavers and occasionally ducks, poultry and frogs.

RANGE: Distribution is extremely spotty over most of North America and at no point



can these animals be said to be very numerous.

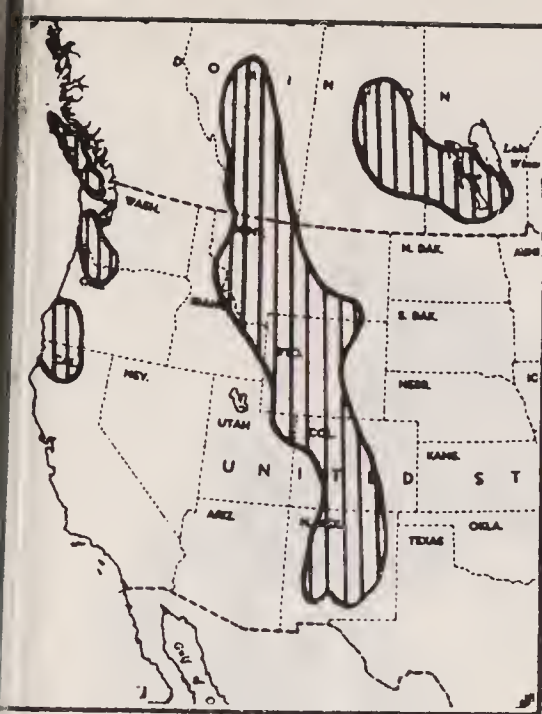
BREEDING: They are not very prolific. There are but two or three a year in the one litter. The birth place is a den along the bank of a stream or lake with an underwater entrance.



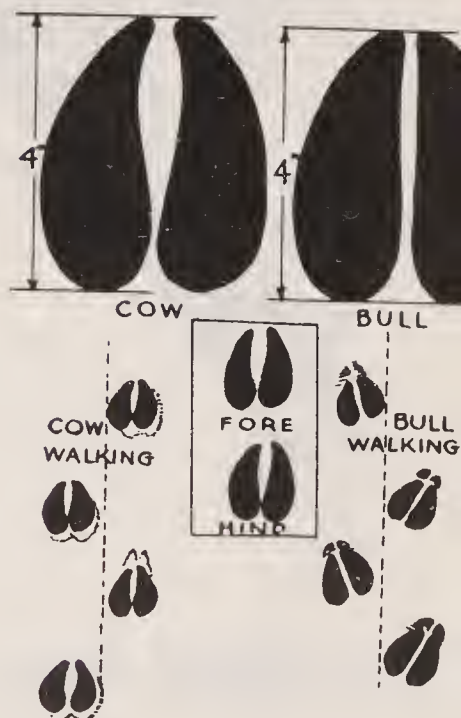
Elk

IDENTIFICATION: The bull is much more handsome than the unantlered swaybacked cow. The round, slender antlers often rise a majestic five feet above his head. Both sexes have a neck mane, a muzzle barren of hair, a small head and large ears. The head is dark brown and the sides, back and legs are a lighter grayish-brown; there is a light patch on the rump and tail. The average weight is 700 to 1000 pounds and over all length 9 feet.

CHARACTERISTICS: The elk is gregarious, migrating in large herds in the winter and banding together in a typical group of several cows with their young, along with two or three bulls in the summer season.



Distribution of Elk



FOOD: Though he grazes to some extent on grass, he is primarily a browser, preferring twigs and leaves. Naturally wary of man, he will put aside canny alertness in the winter season when forced to eat hay provided by man.

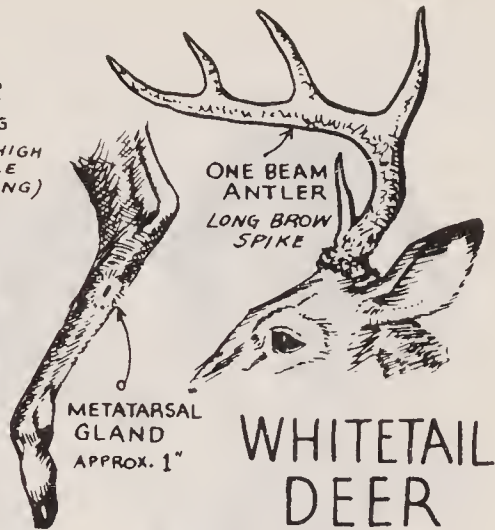
ENEMIES: His enemies are the same as those of the deer—man, cougar, bear, wolf and coyote. The adults can usually defend themselves against attack, but the fawns normally are easy prey.



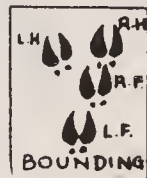
Whitetail Deer

IDENTIFICATION: The white tail and the antlers which do not branch and re-branch are characteristics of the species. Only the male develops antlers and they are worn for only a limited time each year. There is a metatarsal gland on the middle of the leg.

CHARACTERISTICS: The size varies with latitude, the largest appearing in the northern range. Normally a shy animal they prefer thick cover and are skilled at skulking in order to circle an enemy. When startled, the buck "blows," which is a whistling warn-

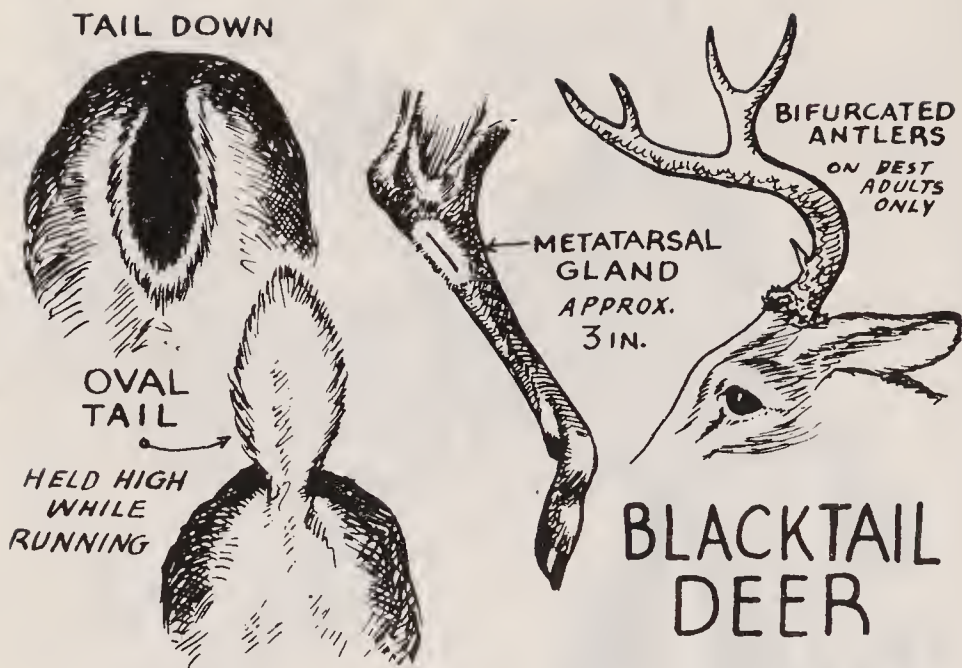


WHITETAIL DEER



ing to other deer. The deer is not migratory. Life span is about 12 years. The greatest enemies are wolves, coyotes, members of the wildcat family and, of course, man.

FOOD: In summer the food includes grasses, leaves of shrubs and trees, roots, twigs and aquatic plants; in the fall he favors apples, acorns and corn; winter presents a food problem and it is then that he is forced to turn to briars, cedar, balsam and spruce along with dead leaves and dead grass.



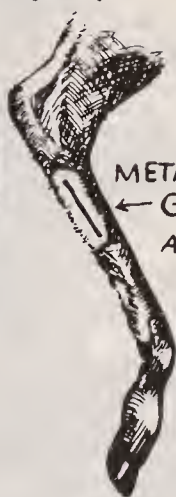
Blacktail Deer *Mule Deer*

The general appearance of the blacktail and mule deer is very similar. They are both chunky and rugged in build. The size of either type is largely dependent upon the food supply of his range. The blacktail averages 150 pounds, with the average mulie weighing 250 to 300 pounds. The tail of the blacktail is as distinctive as the name implies, black on the outside and white underneath. It is bushier and wider than the mule's, which is shorter and hairless on the inside surface and is typically white with a black tip. The wariness of the blacktail is much like that of the white-tail. Their feeding habits have been likened to those of grazing cattle—eating in the morning and then resting until they eat again in

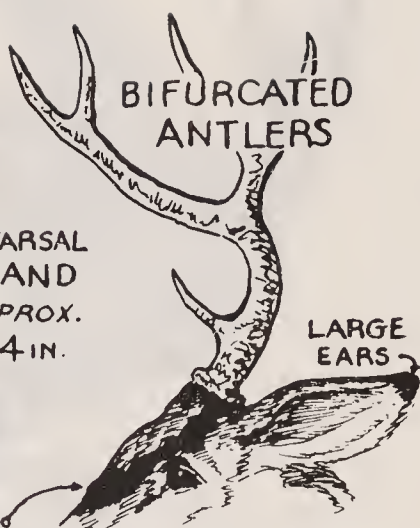
MULE DEER



BLACK-TIPPED
ROPE LIKE
TAIL
[HELD DOWN WHILE
RUNNING]



METATARSAL
GLAND
←
APPROX.
4 IN.

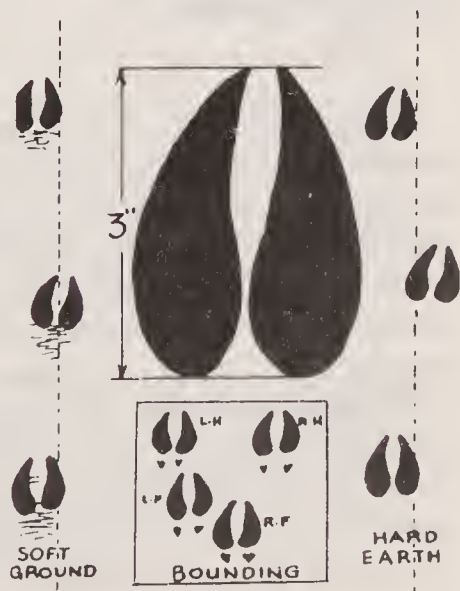


BIFURCATED
ANTLERS

LARGE
EARS

BLACK HORSE-SHOE
SHAPED PATCH ON
FOREHEAD

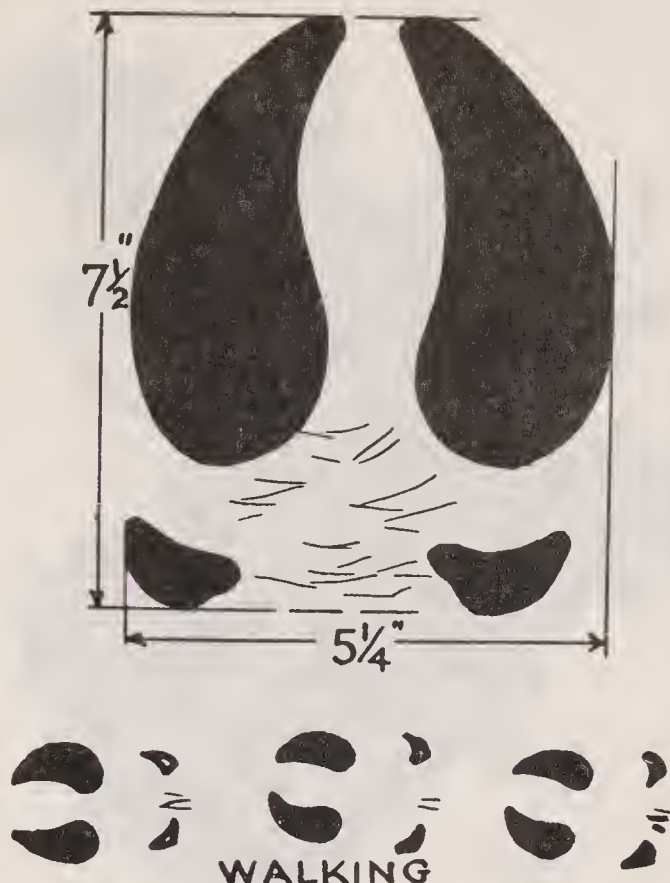
the afternoon. They graze chiefly on grass and other vegetation, and browse on numerous types of foliage and shrubs. The breeding habits and the birth and care of the fawns of the mule and blacktail deer are much like those of the whitetail.





Caribou

IDENTIFICATION: The identifying characteristic is the magnificent antler. The caribou is the only member of the deer family in which both male and female are antlered, with even a one-month-old fawn bearing a spike. Brown is the normal coloration and all seasonal changes are variations of that color with white trimmings. There are a number of different species of this animal. Wide hoofs take caribou with ease over difficult terrain and for this reason they do not “yard” in the winter as do less fortunately endowed mem-



**WIDE SPREAD PRINTS - SHOWING
PROMINENT CLOUT MARKS.**

bers of the deer family. Bulls weigh from 300 to 600 pounds, females typically less.

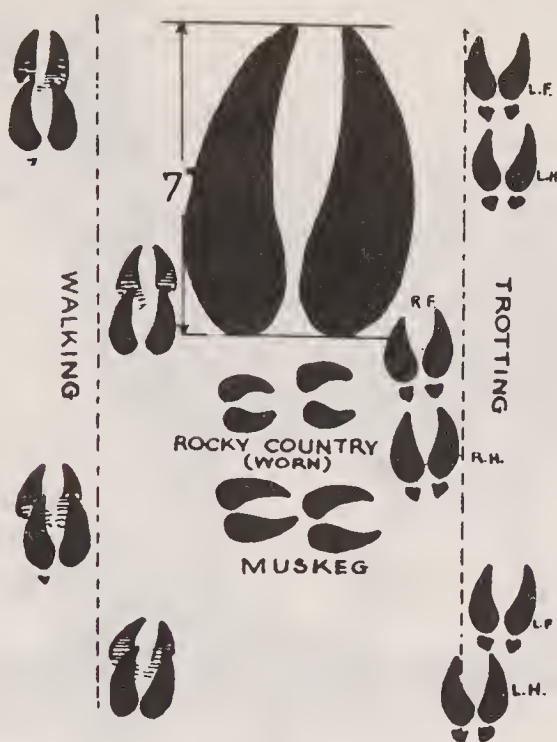
FOOD: In the summer he eats green grasses, plants and shrubs, and in the winter he digs in the snow for a fungus growth, lichen, popularly called "reindeer moss." He often eats as he runs, taking a bite about every five yards gathering it in with his tongue and cutting it off with the bottom teeth, since he has no upper ones.

ENEMIES: Man, wolf and the introduced reindeer are rapidly reducing his numbers. Reindeer are not only overgrazing the range, but they are breeding with the caribou, producing an inferior hybrid.



Moose

IDENTIFICATION: North America's largest game animal is the largest member of the deer family. Absurd-looking yet most impressive, the bull carries more weight on his head than any other antlered animal, but the cow develops no horns. From high shoulders, the animal's back slopes to lower hind-quarters and the legs are long. In proportion to height he weighs less than a horse. The heaviest bulls weigh about 1800 pounds and the cows three-quarters that much. A distinctive feature is the bell, a bag of skin with long hair, which



hangs from under the jaw. Its function is not known. Both bull and cow are dark brown in color.

FOOD: The moose wanders about for its food which consists of aquatic plants, grasses and the leaves and twigs of shrubs and trees. In the winter he depends heavily upon willows.

BREEDING: The bull, ordinarily shy, is a mean creature during the rutting season, the months of September, October and November. He will fight other bulls and attack man. The cow and the bull call each other. Twins are usually produced in late April or May.



Antelope

IDENTIFICATION: The pronghorn antelope is neither an antelope nor a goat but actually a true American with no relative in any other part of the world. His curiosity almost led to extermination until there was suitable protection from predators and over-shooting. During the last 25 years his revival has been one of the greatest in the history of conservation. The animal is able to erect the hairs of the rump patch, causing them to flash, thus



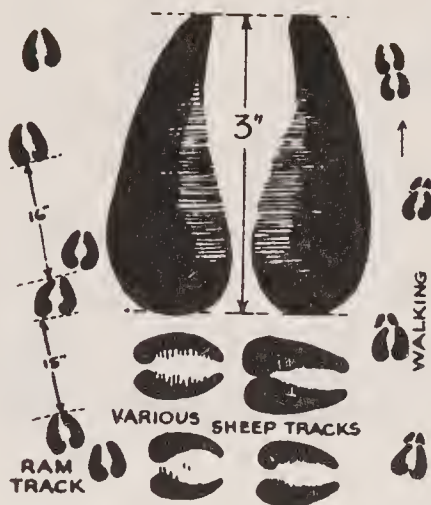
facilitating identification. It is a horned and not an antlered animal, yet it sheds its horns each year. The older the animal the longer the horn, and an 18 inch length is maximum. The white belly and rump merge to a glistening tan and dark brown, and the throat is sharply marked with brown and white bars. A 100 pound buck is an exceptionally large specimen.

CHARACTERISTICS: This animal is both a grazer and a browser. The eyesight is so keen that a pronghorn can see as far as a man equipped with eight power binoculars. The fleetest of all North American game animals, they have been clocked at 70 miles per hour.



Mountain Sheep

IDENTIFICATION: This sturdy but ungraceful animal with the massive horns and keenest of eyesight depends for survival on the ability to scale cliffs more rapidly than any enemy, his range is now restricted to the very roughest of high country. The coat is short hair, not wool, although in winter there is an undercoat of fuzz close to the skin. Usually the color is some shade of gray or dull brown with the rump being marked with a very conspicuous patch of creamy white. Hoofs are black and each enclose four toes equipped with rubbery pads of valuable non-skid properties. Both ewes and rams have promi-

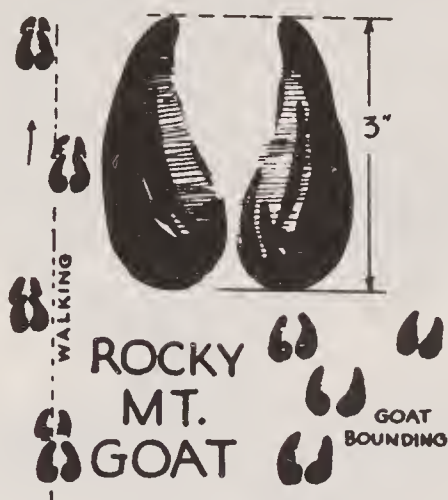


nent curved horns. An old ewe's horns may measure 8 to 10 inches in length, but 36 inches is not an extraordinary length for the very heavy horns of a ram—hence the name bighorn. The ram may attain a weight of 300 pounds and the ewe 175. They are regarded by many as the most coveted prize among North American big game. Their flesh as a food is very highly regarded. Today their very existence hangs in the balance in spite of stringent protective measures.



Mountain Goat

IDENTIFICATION: This animal is not a goat at all, but a type of antelope. Civilization has had but little effect on range or distribution and he is molested less than any other member of the big game family. A beard and a shaggy coat make him appear much larger than he actually is, the average weight being about 250 pounds. Both sexes have horns and both are about the same size. The coat of each is white throughout the year. Horns, lips and hoofs are black; the eyes are yellow. His selection of a habitat, which requires his movements from one infinitesimal ledge to another along sheer cliffside, makes certain footing vitally important. The hoofs are padded in such a way that this is the most surefooted animal on this continent.



CHARACTERISTICS: The goat is a solitary animal by nature, and his lonely life is rarely challenged, for he relies on his inaccessibility for safety from enemies. Only the eagle can meet the goat on his own range, and these birds account for many young kids. He does not possess the eyesight or the cunning of the sheep.

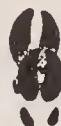
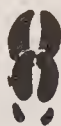


Bison

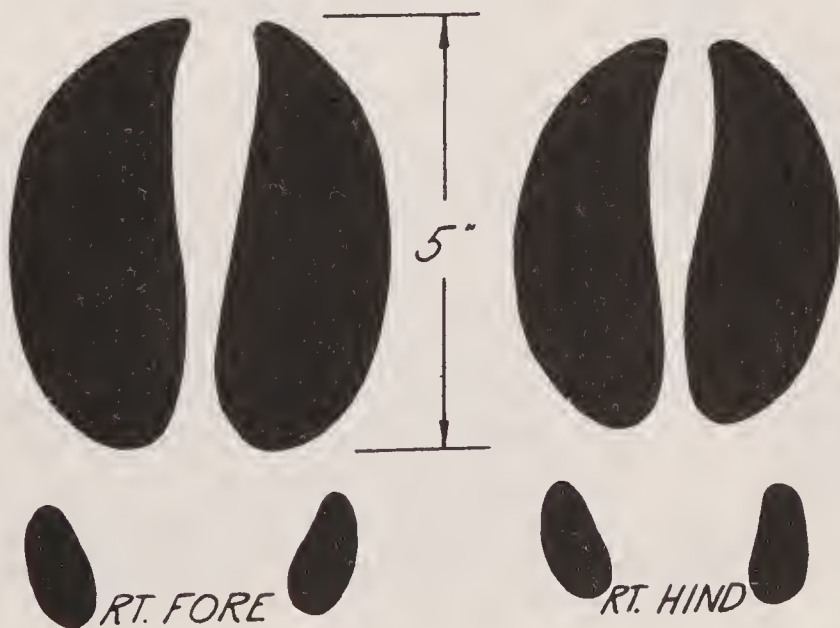
HISTORY: Buffalo is the common name for the American bison although in strict usage it applies only to the species of Asia and Africa. At one time the range extended over one-third of the continent mainly in the mid-section. By 1820 so many had been slaughtered east of the Mississippi that they were a rarity. Tremendous herds on the Great Plains were estimated at 60 to 75 million. Their terrific slaughter brought about the condition that by the turn of the century there was imminent danger of extinction. Theodore Roosevelt played an important role in per-

suading the Federal government to establish protected herds, which today number in total more than 6000 individuals.

IDENTIFICATION: The massive head, the hump on the shoulders and the slumping back hips give the buffalo its characteristic outline. Long, woolly hair on head, hump and shoulders, contrasting sharply in texture with short hair on rest of body adds to the bulky effect. A distinctive feature is the 8 to 10 inch beard. The horns of the bull average 18 inches in length. In the Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago, there is a bull which stands nearly six feet at the shoulders and weighs about 2400 pounds.



WALKING





Black Bear

IDENTIFICATION: Although predominantly black in color, the black bear may be anything but black. The average weight range is from 200 to 500 pounds, however, it is about 60 inches in length and stands 75 inches high at the shoulder. The black bear is free of other markings except for an occasional white patch on the breast.



CHARACTERISTICS: This animal is not gregarious and except for a female with her cubs it is unusual to see more than one at a time. The mother normally permits her cubs to remain with her until a new set is born and the normal female mates only every other year.

FOOD: Although omnivorous, the black bear is inclined to be vegetarian. Primarily he is a root and berry eater, but will readily change to a meat diet. Food includes grass, fruit, berries, grubs, insects, fish, carrion and fresh meat.

BREEDING: Mating takes place in the late spring and early summer. The gestation period is about seven months and the cubs are born late in January during hibernation. At birth they weigh about eight ounces and when they emerge from the den in the spring they weigh about five pounds.



**BLACK
BEAR**





Distribution of Grizzly Bear

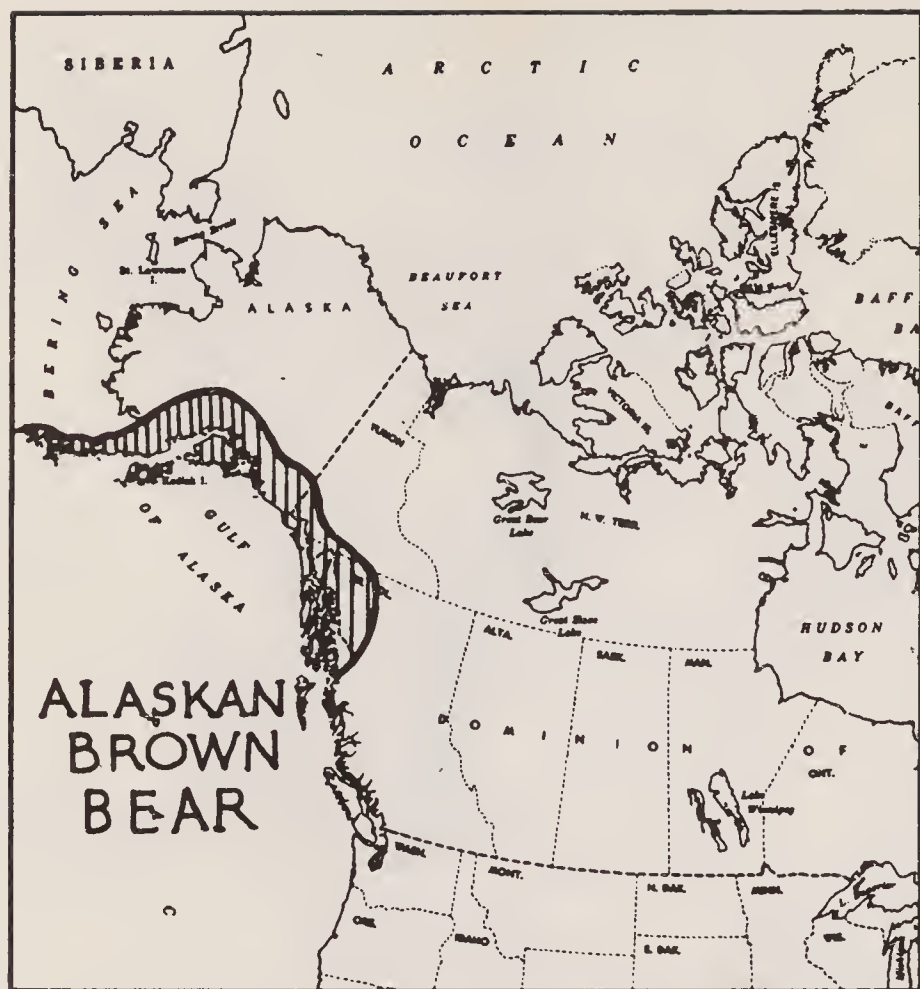
Grizzly Bear

The American grizzly is one of the oldest native animals and is known as "king of North American game animals." His coloration may differ greatly because of the many species, it varies from almost black to light cream. The typical adult male weighs 500 pounds. The grizzly has very poor vision, but his sense of smell and his hearing are very acute. The



GRIZZLY

track of the average mature grizzly will measure about 7 inches in width and from 12 to 14 inches in length. The grizzly feeds mostly on green grass, rock-chucks, gophers, mice, roots, nuts, berries, and is an avid fish-eater. June of every other year is the mating season, with the cubs, normally twins, born in late January or early February.



Distribution of Alaska Brown Bear

Alaska Brown Bear

Like the grizzly, the Alaska brown bear varies in size and weight in different areas. The average brown bear weighs about 800 pounds. The brown bear has the typical characteristic of having an unpredictable behavior. Like other bears, he is omnivorous, but his vegetable diet is abandoned with the first appearance of the salmon run. The mating season begins about mid-May and con-



**ALASKAN
BROWN
BEAR**

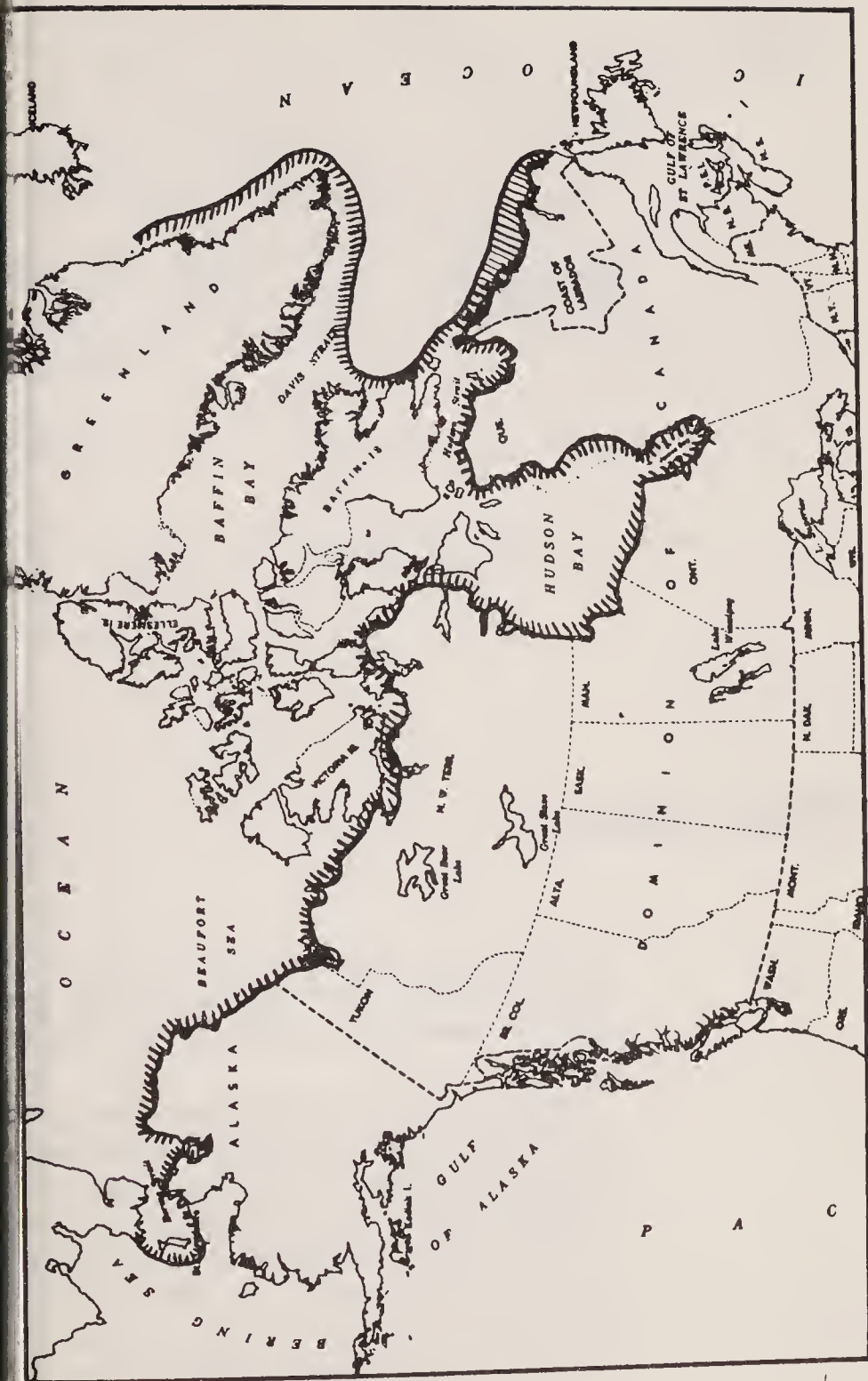


tinues through June. The female breeds only every other year, and normally has two cubs. The Alaska Brown Bear is noted for his ferocity and will use his great strength, size and speed to fight when escape is impossible.

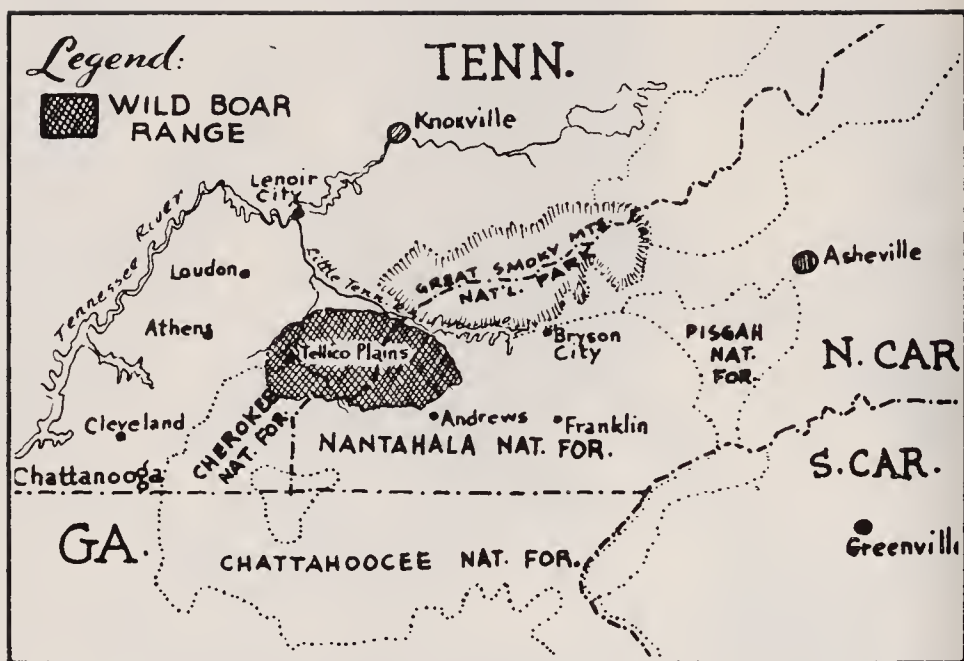


Polar Bear

This monarch of the ice is one of the largest of the bear family. Big males often weigh 1500 to 1600 pounds, and the females scaling from 850 to 900 pounds. His fur is white in winter, yellowish in summer. Largely carnivorous, his favorite food is the seal, but he will turn to fish, porpoise, a stranded whale, roots, seaweed, grass, ducks and scoters. The mating season extends from late May into July, and the cubs, usually just one, arrive late in December or early in January.



Distribution of Polar Bear



Distribution of Wild Boar

Wild Boar

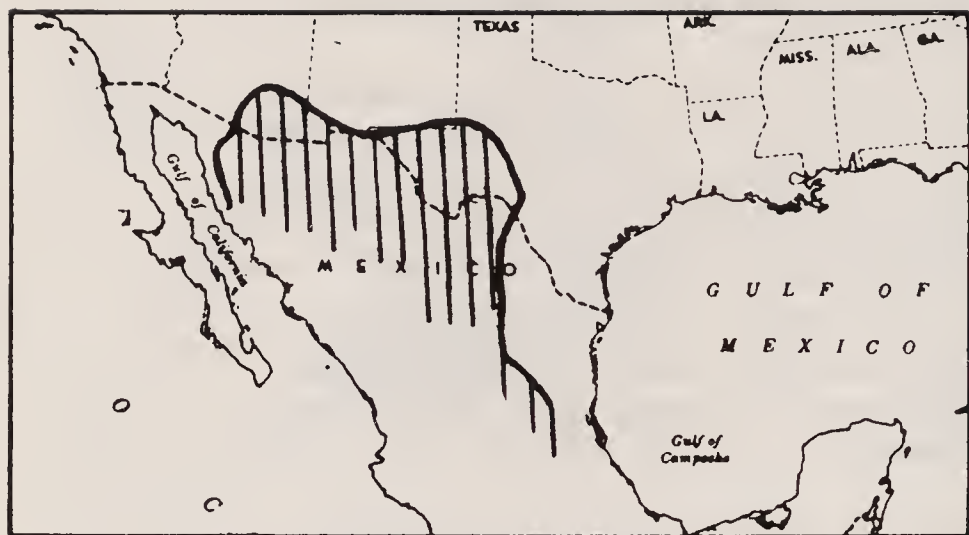
HISTORY: The species was introduced in North Carolina from Germany or Russia and there is speculation concerning the original stocking.

IDENTIFICATION: The physical make-up of this sturdy animal is unlike that of the domestic hog. The narrow body slopes from mighty shoulders to almost nondescript hind quarters. There is a thick wool-like undercoat beneath the long dark brown or brownish-black bristles. The eye has a red glint and razorlike tusks, the chief weapon, protrude from the

lower jaw. 200 to 350 pound specimens are not uncommon.

CHARACTERISTICS: Agile and ill-tempered, the boar prefers to fight at close range. He takes the greatest toll of the hunters hounds of any American big game. His capacity to keep going after severe injury is remarkable.

FOOD: With no pretense to a fancy appetite he will eat acorns, roots, grubs, frogs, eggs, green field corn, apples, cherries and berries.



Distribution of Javelina

Javelina

(PECCARY)

RANGE: A distant relative of the domestic pig and the wild boar, the javelina inhabits the arid areas of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and south to Patagonia.

IDENTIFICATION: In build this animal resembles a small pig, except that it seldom takes on fat. Full-grown animals average three feet in length and weigh 50 to 70 pounds. At a distance they appear to be black, but at close range the color usually is dark gray with a salt-and-pepper effect. The head has small erect ears and a rather long snout which closes to hide the tusks almost entirely. The forefoot has four toes, the hind foot three, and the hoofs are small.



RT. FORE



RT. HIND

CHARACTERISTICS: Peccaries are gregarious. Early morning and late afternoon are the preferred feeding times with a midday siesta. They leave a smell of musk hanging over their feeding grounds and hiding places.

FOOD: Apparently they will eat anything available including: roots, acorns, nuts, fallen fruit, berries, insects, toads and snakes.

Comparative Tracks



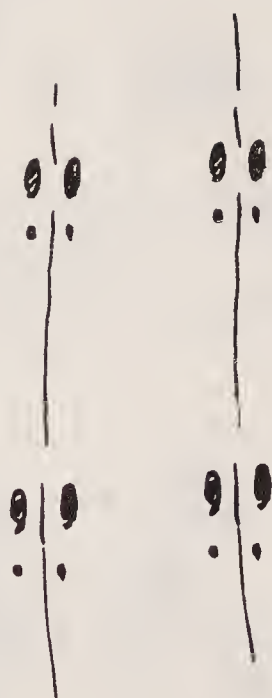
Cat



Dog



Chipmunk



Field Mouse

Comparative Tracks



OPPOSSUM



PRAIRIE
DOG



RACCOON



SQUIRREL



BADGER



BEAVER



MUSKRAT



WOODCHUCK



COTTONTAIL-HARE



Comparative Tracks



BOBCAT



FOX



COUGAR



LYNX



WOLVERINE



WOLF



COYOTE



SKUNK

GAME TRACKING IN WINTER

By CLYDE L. ALLISON, *Outdoor Photographers League*

NATURE'S GREATEST THRILL is the thrill of discovery—and it's yours for the asking! No admission charge. No equipment needed. Not even a license required. You need not travel far, either, for the closest woodlot or small stream with wooded banks will do. You will find an abundance of wildlife living within traffic sound of our largest cities.

A clear, calm day after a light snow will provide plenty of trails. However, don't be content to merely identify a track, but follow it for some distance. Notice the changes in pace as shown by the distance between leaps or steps. Try to determine the reason. Other nearby tracks may help. Perhaps this furry friend of ours was a hunter—or the hunted! Food habits, droppings and dens all tell an intriguing story. Traits which have no apparent reason but are peculiar to certain animals may be discovered.

The sportsman who is a hunter can spend time during the off-season learning more of the game of his choice. The successful trapper has spent many hours following trails, learning the habits and locations of the furbearers he hopes to trap. He considers this a pleasant and important part of his work.

There is, perhaps, no better way to introduce a youngster to nature than on a walk in search of snow trails. Young and old will find that nature reveals many of her secrets in winter that are difficult, if not impossible, to solve at any other time.

Courtesy Pennsylvania Game News

Comparative Tracks



GRIZZLY



ALASKAN
BROWN
BEAR





POLAR BEAR



BLACK BEAR

Comparative Tracks



Whitetail Deer



Antelope



Elk Tracks



Moose Walking



Moose Trotting



Caribou Tracks

FIELD NOTES



FIELD NOTES



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"I consider this volume of interest and value to all youths and to all outdoor-loving people who enjoy hiking in the country. This is definitely a royal road to such knowledge." *R. Marlin Perkins*

Guide To Animal Tracks

Clearly illustrated and compared are the prints left by 27 of the most common small animals and 16 large game animals found in North America. Included with each entry are concise facts on identification and characteristics of each animal.

Sixteen maps help in locating the range of some of the more unusual, seldom seen animals.

Among the animal tracks identified are:

Antelope

Badger

Beaver

Bison (buffalo)

Bear (brown, black, and polar)

Deer (whitetail, blacktail, and mule)

Bobcat

Javelina (Peccary)

Marten

Mink

Opossum

Otter

Prairie Dog

Rabbit

Raccoon

Wolf

Look for these other PACKIT books: *The American Youth Hostels' Bike/Hike Book*, *Color Guide to Common Wild Edibles*, *Master Backpacker*, *Trailside Cooking*, *Wintering: The Outdoor Book for Cold Weather Ventures*, and *Wildlife in the West*.



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